been initiated for making payment to the depositors and investors in accordance with the notified scheme.

Official Going Abroad

1776. DR. MAHESH CHANDRA SHARMA:

SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Government OfficaLs of the rank of JS and above who have been allowed to go abroad on official tours during the past three years, with their names and designation, year-wise;

(b) the sanctioning authority and the limit of foreign exchange incurred on each of them;

(c) the object/purpose behind such tours; and

(d) whether the financial burden on Government is increasing in terms of foreign exchange by such tours?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (d) Relevant information being not centrally available, it is being collected from all the Ministeries and Departments. This will be laid on the table of the House as early as possible.

Suggestion for Reduction of Sales Tax by NIPF

1777. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Institute of Public Finance has in its report suggested reduction of Central sales tax;

(b) if so, what are the other recommendations made in the report; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) and (b) Following are the important recommendations made by NIPF in its report on 'Reform of Inter-State Sales Taxation in India':

(i) The maximum rate of CST may be reduced to 3% *w.e.f.* April, 2001 to 1% from the beginning of 2003 (with rebate on input tax paid) and to zero per cent thereafter (with full set off for input tax paid);

(ii) Amendment of the CST Act to provide for taxing of declared goods at more than one stage by those States that provide for full set off for taxes on all goods used as inputs and on purchases for resale;

(iii) Amendment of the CST act to make 'C Form mandatory for all interstate transaction;

(iv) Amendment of the CST Act to delete items falling under Additional excise duty in lieu of sales tax (AEDILST) from the list of declared goods;

(v) Discontinuance of the rental arrangement between the Central and the State Governments in respect of AEDILST.

(vi) Delegation of the power to collect the tax on a number of localized services to the State Govts, that would retain the proceeds; and

(vii) Merger of the tax on services at the Central level as well as at the State level with the VAT on goods in course of time.

(c) An Empowered Committee of Finance Ministers of 9 States has been constituted by the Union Government to monitor reforms in the Central Sales Tax system. This Committee has asked a Committee of Finance Secretaries of all the States to examine these recommendations and advise the Empowered Committee.

Change of promoter / management without approval of BIFR

1778. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether change of promoter / management is permissible without the approval of BIFR when the companies stand referred to BIFR and scheme sanctioned by BIFR are under implementation; and

(b) if so, whether approval has been obtained from BIFR for change of promoter/management in case of PSUs where sanctioned scheme is under implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) have reported that change of promoters / management is not permissible without the approval of BIFR in respect of the sick industrial companies from both Public and Private Sector which are under implementation